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PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT IN THE EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

SUMMARY

The present document reports on and analyses major new trends and developments of UNICEF programme cooperation in the Eastern and Southern Africa region during 1993.

The UNICEF regional office has responsibility for UNICEF cooperation in the following countries: Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Comoros, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Somalia, Swaziland, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

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I. REGIONAL OVERVIEW

1. Political developments in the Eastern and Southern Africa region were generally positive in 1993. Several countries, including Malawi and the United Republic of Tanzania, continued to make progress towards multiparty systems. Lesotho and Madagascar held general elections in which peaceful transfers of power took place. Multiparty local government elections were held in Namibia and Zambia. In Rwanda, a peace accord was signed between the Government and rebel forces, and a broad-based transitional Government was installed at the end of 1993, with plans to hold elections within two years. In Mozambique, the peace accord reached in 1992 between the Government and the Resistencia Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) was gradually consolidated, and multiparty elections are scheduled for late 1994. Although troop demobilization was delayed, hundreds of thousands of civilians were able to return to their homes and fields from urban and refugee settlements. UNICEF, in collaboration with other agencies, provided large-scale support for the resettlement of displaced people in both Mozambique and Rwanda. Ethiopia maintained its stability and undertook large-scale military demobilization and substantial decentralization of its State administration. Meanwhile, following the May 1993 referendum, Eritrea gained independence and established a provisional Government.

2. In contrast, some countries in the region continued to experience strife and instability, which caused widespread civilian deaths. Most dramatic was the continuing conflict in Angola. The direct and indirect casualties of the fighting that engulfed much of the country in 1993 are certain to run into hundreds of thousands of children and adults killed by warfare, disease and malnutrition. Countless others have been maimed, orphaned or traumatized psychologically and socially. A military coup d'état in Burundi in October 1993 ended a brief period of democratic rule following mid-year elections. Hundreds of thousands of civilians fled to neighbouring Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zaire, and widespread massacres were reported. Meanwhile, the huge number of child deaths witnessed in 1992 in Somalia gradually abated as the 1992-1993 relief effort took hold. A degree of security returned to most of the country, facilitating a partial recovery of food production. However, the capital, Mogadishu, was caught in the grip of prolonged conflict and destabilization, which greatly impaired the ability of UNICEF to assist civilians, especially in the absence of any civilian authority. The main negotiating parties in South Africa reached agreement on transitional arrangements, which should lead to the country's first non-racial elections, as well as to a set of guiding principles for a Constitution to be written thereafter. However, levels of politically related violence continued to rise, raising fears about the prospects for free and fair elections. As a result of the instability in southern Sudan, tens of thousands of newly displaced people took refuge in Uganda, while in Kenya, thousands were displaced and many killed in inter-ethnic violence.

3. Climatic conditions were generally favourable. Most of southern Africa received good rains, following one of the worst seasons of the century. This, together with measures to support recovery by smallholder farmers, permitted a doubling of cereal output in the 10 countries members of the Southern African

Development Community (formerly known as the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC)). However, large structural food-aid needs remained in Angola and Mozambique as a result of past and present conflict. There were growing fears of drought in parts of east Africa by late 1993, including Kenya, and Ethiopia estimated that 3 million of its people were in need of food assistance as a result.

4. Following a year of economic stagnation in 1992, overall trends in the region suggested a significant recovery in 1993. The good agricultural performance in southern Africa, together with improved security conditions in Mozambique and much of Somalia, as well as greater political stability in Ethiopia and Madagascar, were among the positive factors in 1993. However, overall economic output in 1993-1994 will probably only just keep pace with population growth.

5. The region continued to perform poorly on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index, with only 4 countries appearing in the medium human development category and 8 ranking among the bottom 25 in the world, according to the 1993 Human Development Report. When this index is combined with population, it is evident that human deprivation persists on a large scale in several countries in the region, particularly Ethiopia.

6. By late 1993, almost all countries in the region had produced final or substantive draft national programmes of action for children, indicating their commitment to national goals for children and human development priorities. UNICEF field offices and the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office were gradually able to shift their focus from support to countries in the formulation of national programmes of action to support for implementation, monitoring, resource mobilization and improvement of costing. Moves towards the decentralization of national programmes of action, through adaption at municipal, regional or district levels, commenced in several countries, including Botswana, Namibia, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, and are expected in Ethiopia.

7. Supported by the Consensus of Dakar, a number of Governments in the region have been undertaking a significant restructuring of national budgets to give higher priority to social and human development priorities. In Ethiopia, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda and elsewhere, this restructuring has gone together with a reduction of real spending on defence and security. Specific commitments to increased social or human development allocations in public spending have been made in a number of national programmes of action and country policy framework papers. This has been matched by a discernible shift in sector priorities towards these areas by the World Bank and some bilateral donors. For example, in its 1993 financial year, roughly one quarter of the World Bank's lending approvals for countries in the Eastern and Southern Africa region were for human development priority areas.

8. However, the economies of several countries in the region remain highly aid-dependent at a time when total net financial flows to sub-Saharan Africa are falling in real terms. The region's international terms of trade show no signs

of significant or sustained recovery. Debt-servicing obligations continue to cut deeply into the export earnings of many countries in the region.

9. In addition to these persistently damaging trends, and potentially the most serious, is the growing impact on the health and productive capacity of the region caused by the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) epidemic. An independent analysis for the World Bank of one country in the region suggests a reduction of average real growth of up to 1 per cent per year resulting from the impact of HIV/AIDS on labour productivity and the diversion of savings to medical expenses. UNICEF country programming in the region is giving greater prominence to AIDS prevention and control measures, particularly among the youth, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and a wide range of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

II. CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

10. Of the 23 countries in the region, only 7 have not yet ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Of these, the Comoros, Eritrea, Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland have signed the Convention, Somalia is affected by a complex emergency, and Botswana has yet to sign. In a number of countries, UNICEF has begun to assist national agencies in monitoring and reporting on implementation of the Convention. However, national capacity for the protection and promotion of the rights of the child is generally in the early stages of development and strategies will need to be formulated. A range of collaborative efforts with respect to the Convention are anticipated with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), following the 1992 International Conference on Assistance to African Children held in Dakar, in conjunction with regional NGOs.

III. MID-DECADE GOALS

11. In 1993, most countries in the region produced work plans for the attainment of the mid-decade goals. Subsequently, a regional work plan was produced, focusing on technical and operational support to the country plans, and was then refined through feasibility analysis and assessment of ongoing regional support to countries for the achievement of the goals. A June 1993 review discussed a number of key issues specific to the region with respect to the feasibility of the mid-decade goals. It was clear that account needed to be taken of the likely short- and medium-term impact of HIV/AIDS on infant and maternal mortality and other goals of the World Summit for Children. However, it was felt that this did not detract from the importance and feasibility of the mid-decade goals. The ethical aspects of advice on breast-feeding were noted, especially as regards the breast-feeding of children born to HIV-infected mothers, in view of reported transmission rates of up to 50 per cent. A few countries are supporting logistical systems that facilitate condom distribution and activities in this field are expected to expand in the region.

12. The review considered the mid-decade goals related to immunization to be feasible for most countries in the region. However, funding is becoming a significant problem for several countries, including Ethiopia, where coverage

rates fell to as low as 13 per cent as a result of the political upheaval of recent years. Malaria control is an additional area where goals have been established by several countries. East Africa has taken a lead in conducting trials and promoting the use of impregnated bednets and cloths, which may be a cost-effective approach at the household level.

IV. EXPERIENCE WITH THE APPLICATION OF RECENT EXECUTIVE BOARD POLICIES

13. All countries in the region preparing full programmes for consideration by the Executive Board are now including integrated monitoring and evaluation plans. These plans are based on a review of the programme activities in each sector. Each activity that can be monitored is included in a list that provides the basis for the integrated plan. A number of other countries in the region are also seeking to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation functions in the country programme. By late 1993, some 25 evaluation summaries had been prepared by UNICEF field offices in the region, some covering surveys or studies as well as evaluations.

14. The mix of country programme strategies among service delivery, capacity-building and empowerment is now being considered explicitly by countries preparing new programmes, with the encouragement of the regional office. Several countries are also undertaking structured analyses of their cooperation activities in terms of these categories. The balance of strategic approaches generally appears to be shifting towards capacity-building and empowerment.

15. The role of sentinel site monitoring systems is expanding in the region. The new country programme in Ethiopia is expected to rely significantly on information gathered through these means. The speed with which information becomes available through the sentinel site monitoring system facilitates the adaptation of sectoral programme strategies to reach programme goals throughout the programme implementation phase, as in the cases of Mozambique and Zimbabwe. More conventional data systems are also improving, albeit gradually, and a project has been initiated with the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis to improve information in four countries in the region.

16. Field offices in the region are continuing to address family planning issues, using a holistic approach, through the safe motherhood initiative, the baby-friendly hospital initiative and HIV/AIDS prevention and control programmes. There has been a high level of inter-agency collaboration in these areas between UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), WHO, bilateral donors and NGOs.

17. Major problems that remain in this area include the very wide gap between the knowledge and practice of modern contraception; the low socio-economic status of women and girls; increasing levels of teenage sexual activity and pregnancies in the context of an explosive HIV/AIDS situation and the need to take into account religious and cultural views; and the limited involvement of men in family planning. Studies are being conducted on ways of integrating family planning with the expanded programme on immunization (EPI) in Rwanda and

on appropriate combinations of activities for different target groups in Lesotho. Innovative school-based programmes have been started on the promotion of healthy lifestyles and family health education in Botswana, Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

18. With respect to specific concerns raised at the regular session of the 1993 Executive Board concerning the feasibility of the new Rwanda country programme, annual reviews of programme progress will be held with the Government in the last quarter of each year. An additional review and assessment will be held jointly with the new broad-based transitional Government in March 1994, in advance of the second regular session of the 1994 Executive Board. The prospects for a lasting political settlement improved during 1993, although the emergency situation continued, compounded by the influx of refugees from Burundi and a delay in the arrival of the rains. UNICEF will continue to promote an adaptive approach to programme implementation that will take full account of changing conditions, within the framework of the country programme. The national programme of action will be the subject of regular review and adaption, including with respect to resource availability, in Rwanda, as elsewhere in the region.

V. COOPERATION WITH REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

19. In many priority areas of intervention, UNICEF has, through its country and regional offices, continued to increase its collaboration with African institutions at both national and international levels. These organizations, which include research, training, management, advocacy and academic bodies, are a resource both for UNICEF programme cooperation and for national counterparts in programme implementation. For example, collaboration was begun in recent years and will be continued in 1994 with the Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute on the Bamako Initiative; with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) on the monitoring of goals for children, leading to the preparation of an atlas of the African child; with the Southern African Development Community on drought response and emergency preparedness; with the African Council for Communication Education on the introduction of child survival, protection and development issues in journalist training; and with a range of agencies carrying out analyses and advocacy on the rights of women and children, protection and peace promotion, including ECA, OAU, the African Network for Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect, the African Women's Network, the All-Africa Conference of Churches, the scouts and girl guides movements and the Inter-Africa Group. The latter also has worked closely with the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office on the analysis of emergency and rehabilitation issues in the Horn of Africa. Additional links will be sought in 1994 with regional groups such as the Southern African Development Community and the Eastern and Southern African Preferential Trade Area on issues involved with salt iodization, and with academic institutions and schools of journalism in the region on training related to child survival. In 1992-1993, UNICEF began the practice of providing training opportunities for staff from regional institutions in UNICEF workshops and of training UNICEF staff in regional institutions and this practice will be expanded.

20. Cooperation with other United Nations agencies in countries in the region is becoming more closely defined in the context of assisting Governments to prepare their country strategy notes. In addition, cooperation is being pursued in specific areas, notably, with UNDP and the World Bank on human development issues; with UNFPA on family planning; with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) on nutrition and household food security issues; and with WHO on a range of issues, including AIDS prevention and control and health system decentralization. Coordination with WHO continues to be strengthened through the annual meeting of UNICEF and WHO regional directors in Africa.

VI. REGIONAL OFFICE SUPPORT TO FIELD OFFICES

21. During 1993, the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office provided about 1,000 work-days of direct professional and technical advisory support to UNICEF field offices in the region, over twice the country-level support provided in 1992. Of this, some 70 per cent was in support of programme development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including assistance for the development and planning of national programmes of action, in order to address the mid-decade goals. The remaining 30 per cent was in support of field office operations, including personnel, management, supply and information resource management. In the allocation of Professional staff time at the Regional Office, priority was given to support of countries preparing programmes for the 1994 Executive Board, which received about one half the total time, as well as countries with large child populations and poor human development indicators, such as Ethiopia, and to the new programmes in the process of being established in South Africa and Eritrea. Support was provided to field offices in certain specialized areas, including sanitation planning, security assessments and mainstreaming of gender issues in programme planning, through contractual services managed and supported by the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office. The Regional Office also assisted the UNICEF field office in Somalia by conducting a full review of the country programme, including an analysis of the socio-political context and causes of the emergency in Somalia.

22. The Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office provided strong support to the development of staff capacity in key areas of the region, under the guidance of the Regional Training Committee. Training workshops held in 1993 for field office staff in the region covered subjects such as programme process, costs and financing for children, information resource management for managers, emergency management and addressing the psycho-social needs of children, especially in emergency situations. The Regional Office also provided operational support to the follow-up of field office audits, information resource management systems establishment, procurement, supplies and logistics. Two inter-country workshops on the implementation of national programmes of action were organized for national officials with regional resource persons.

23. Regional networking activities continued to be strong, with facilitation by field office representatives and the Regional Office, through a combination of meetings, often jointly with Governments and other agencies, as well as information exchanges and circulation of research findings. Multicountry

studies were undertaken on household food security, drought management and nutritional interventions in emergencies. The Regional Office and field offices initiated collaborative studies in areas such as the impact of structural adjustment on access to basic education and the scope for budgetary restructuring in favour of human development.

VII. TRENDS AND PROSPECTS FOR UNICEF COLLABORATION IN THE REGION

24. Achieving the mid-decade goals for children in the region is likely to be feasible for most countries, but the prospects for the goals of the World Summit for Children are less clear. Recent data indicate that infant and maternal mortality rates, which had been decreasing, are now beginning to rise, with the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases related to weakened public health conditions. Increasingly, UNICEF will focus its health support on strengthening health care delivery systems, with an emphasis on community participation and cost-effective, affordable services, as part of overall health system reforms; maintaining the high coverage and quality of EPI while targeting low coverage and improving disease surveillance; reducing maternal and perinatal complications and death through the safe motherhood initiative and the baby-friendly hospital initiative; and prevention and control efforts in the areas of malaria and AIDS. Efforts to prevent and control AIDS will be particularly targeted through educational efforts for behavioural change and support to community coping mechanisms. Complementary to HIV/AIDS education efforts with young people, project innovations, especially in Zimbabwe, have enlisted the participation of sex workers and trained them as trainers in both communications and means of protection. Such efforts, in cooperation with the business community as well as health workers, may point the way to addressing certain high-risk groups and reducing cases of sexually transmitted diseases.

25. In 1994, the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office will increase its advisory support to countries aiming at the eradication of dracunculiasis (guinea-worm disease), and will promote opportunities for strengthening overall public health through the establishment of sustainable integrated surveillance systems, with focus at the community level. The expected decline of the incidence of polio in several southern African countries will be monitored and verified during 1994-1995 and used as a means of mobilizing additional countries in the region towards this goal.

26. For water supply and environmental sanitation, UNICEF will support efforts to reach the World Summit goals, with particular emphasis in countries where the service gaps are widest and institutional capacities weakest. The promotion of hygiene behavioural change related to water use and excreta disposal, the development of more effective communication and advocacy activities and the encouragement of local participation in financing and managing improvements in the areas of water supply and environmental sanitation will be central to these efforts. The achievement of global goals in sanitation will likely be among the most difficult for the region to attain. In 1993, the Regional Office took initiatives to make consulting services in this area available to several countries, including Eritrea, Ethiopia, Madagascar and Uganda.

27. The potential for achieving universal iodization of processed salt in the region is high and will be pursued vigorously at the national level and through coordinated inter-country initiatives with the support of the Regional Office. Significant reduction of vitamin A deficiencies may also be achievable, including through the EPI-plus strategy, but will require greater policy efforts and availability of resources. Iron-deficiency anaemia presents a major challenge and remains an underlying factor for the very high rates of maternal mortality in the region. Protein-energy malnutrition remains high, and while the halving of severe protein-energy malnutrition may be achievable, including through the intensification of community-based child survival and development programmes, chronic malnutrition, which reflects widespread household food insecurity, will be susceptible to overall economic factors. Efforts to promote basic education for all, with particular emphasis on girls, are likely to contribute to improved child nutrition over the medium term. UNICEF will focus support on efforts to reduce gender disparities in basic education, particularly through preventing girls from dropping out of school, as well as by helping children make the transition from home to school, and improving the information base for basic education planning.

28. Given the widespread armed conflicts of recent years and the continuing rise in violence, particularly in South Africa, greater emphasis will be given to promoting the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, understanding and addressing the psycho-social effects of conflicts on children, and the dissemination of experience with measures to assist them in normalization and recovery. Similar and growing priority will apply to street children and those orphaned because of AIDS. Interventions to support improved disaster preparedness at national and local levels and to reduce vulnerability to emergencies, including among women, will also form a significant part of UNICEF programmes in the region. Meanwhile, advocacy and analysis will be continued on broader issues of human development, including budgetary restructuring to support basic services, debt reduction initiatives and poverty-conscious economic reform policies. National programmes of action and country strategy notes will continue to provide frameworks for national and inter-agency collaboration in addressing these issues, with UNICEF participation. It is expected that increasing consideration will be given to national programmes of action in the World Bank-led consultative group meetings of countries in the region, as was the case in 1993.

29. The emergence of South Africa from several decades of political isolation as a result of apartheid is expected to provide major new opportunities for technical cooperation, regional supply procurement, fund-raising and professional interaction within the region. Great potential exists for mutually beneficial interchange of experience in health, education, food security and other fields between South Africa and other countries in the region. UNICEF maintained a full-time staff presence in South Africa during 1993, under agreement with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and supported the development of the first situation analysis of South Africa's children, which was completed and released to coincide with the celebration of the Day of the African Child, held in Johannesburg. These and other activities have helped to lay the basis for accelerating the UNICEF programme of cooperation in South Africa in 1994 under an expected non-racial Government.

30. In 1994, in addition to inter-country and regional-level initiatives, the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office will continue to give priority technical advisory support to offices preparing new country programmes, as well as to new UNICEF offices in the region and offices requiring particular support in programme development and implementation to support the achievement of the mid-decade goals.